The economic and social conditions in which people live and work can influence health and life expectancy. Examples of these social determinants of health are: income, employment, education, housing, early life experiences, social exclusion, and social support. The determinants affect a person's life and work conditions, such as stress levels, access to healthy food, safe places to exercise, exposure to environmental hazards, and availability of early learning opportunities. These exposures interact to increase or decrease the risk for many major diseases, such as heart disease, stroke and Type 2 diabetes.

**General Population**
- Dakota County’s population grew from 355,904 in 2000 to 398,552 in 2010 – a 12 percent increase. The state population grew by eight percent during the same period. The 2017 population estimate is 421,751.
- Although the county reached its population growth peak during the 1980s and 1990s, there was still a 12 percent increase during the decade from 2000-2010.
- Dakota County has the third largest population in the state and represents an estimated 7.6 percent of the state's population.

**Age distribution**
- The median age of Dakota County residents increased from 30.2 years in 1990 to 36.8 years in 2010 – a 22 percent increase. In 2017, it is estimated to be 37.9.
- The State of Minnesota Demographer's Office projects that there will be 85,908 Dakota County residents 65 and older in 2030 – an increase of 116 percent from 2010.
Racial/ethnic distribution

- In 2017, people of color made up an estimated 21 percent of the Dakota County population. In the 2018-19 school year, 35.5 percent of Dakota County public and charter school students were students of color. Hispanics, blacks, and Asian/Pacific Islanders are the largest racial and ethnic groups in the county.
- The State of Minnesota Demographer’s Office projects that the populations of color in Dakota County will increase by 80.5 percent from 2010 to 2030. The white population is projected to grow by four percent in the same period.
- In the 2018-19 school year, 18 percent of Dakota County public and charter school students spoke a language other than English in their home – a total of 159 different languages. Spanish was the most commonly-spoken language after English.

Economic factors

- In 2017, an estimated seven percent of Dakota County residents had incomes below the poverty level – the same as in 2010. Dakota County was below the state overall (10.5 percent) in 2017.
- An estimated nine percent of Dakota County children under 18 lived in households with incomes below the federal poverty level in 2017. Poverty in children under 18 decreased from 11 percent in 2013.
- In 2017, the median household income in Dakota County was an estimated $79,995–higher than the state ($65,699) and an increase from 2013.
- In 2018, unemployment in Dakota County was 2.6 percent, on average. This was a decrease from a 3.8 percent average in 2014. Dakota County was slightly below the state average (2.9 percent) for 2018.

Transportation

- In 2017, 81 percent of Dakota County workers 16 and older commuted to work alone, slightly higher than Minnesota (78 percent).
- Four percent of Dakota County households have no vehicle available (2017), below the state (seven percent).

Education

- In 2017, an estimated 95 percent of Dakota County residents 25 and older had a high school education or higher; 41 percent had a Bachelor’s degree or higher.
- In 2018, Dakota County ranked fourth among metro area counties for third-grade reading scores and eighth-grade math scores.

Community

- In 2018, 20 percent of people of voting age were not registered and 29 percent of people of voting age did not vote in the 2018 general election.
- In 2014, 25 percent of Dakota County adults 25 and older said they did not interact with friends or neighbors at least weekly.

For more information:
- U.S. Census Bureau [www.census.gov](http://www.census.gov)
- Minnesota State Demographic Center [www.mn.gov/admin/demography/](http://www.mn.gov/admin/demography/)
- MN Department of Education [www.education.state.mn.us](http://www.education.state.mn.us)

The Dakota County Public Health Department is accredited by the national Public Health Accreditation Board.
For more information about the Dakota County community health assessment, email public.health@co.dakota.mn.us or call 651.554.6100.